

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-07 CAB-02 CIAE-00 COME-00
DODE-00 DOTE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 EPG-02 FAA-00
JUSE-00 PM-04 H-01 L-03 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01
SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /069 W
-----162100Z 099454 /70

R 161953Z JUN 77
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4288
INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON
FAA BRUSSELS

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E,O, 11652 N/A
TAGS: EAIR, FR, UK, US
SUBJ: CIVAIR: CONCORDE

REF: STATE 139193 (NOTAL)

1. IN THE LIGHT OF REPORTS OF THE COURT OF APPEALS DECISION ON CONCORDE, WE HAD STEELED OURSELVES FOR EXPECTED STRONG REACTION FROM GOF. HERE IN PARIS IT HAS NOT BEEN FORTHCOMING-- AT LEAST NOT YET. THE ONLY OFFICIAL PUBLIC STATEMENT WAS ONE ISSUED BY THE STATE SECRETARIAT OF TRANSPORTATION ON JUNE 14, EXPRESSING DISAPPOINTMENT OVER THE COURT OF APPEALS DECISION BECAUSE OF LIKELIHOOD OF DELAY IN COMMENCEMENT OF CONCORDE SERVICE TO NEW YORK.

2. FROMENT-MEURICE, DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL AFFAIRS AT THE FOREIGN MINISTRY INITIALLY TOOK THIS SAME LINE IN JUNE 15
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CONVERSATION WITH MINECON. MINECON , EXPLAINING THAT UNLIKE FROMENT-MEURICE HE DID NOT YET HAVE FULL TEXT OF THE DECISION, EXPRESSED THE PERSONAL VIEW THAT WITH THE DISTRICT COURT NOW HAVING TO FOCUS ON WHETHER PORT AUTHORITY HAD BEEN "REASONABLE" IN REFUSING CONCORDE ACCESS TO JFK UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES COULD

MEAN THAT DENOUEMENT MIGHT NOW COME FAIRLY RAPIDLY. FROMENT-MAURICE CONFIDED THAT FRANKLY THIS CORRESPONDED TO HIS OWN READING, WHICH HE HAD CONVEYED TO HIS FOREIGN MINISTRY STAFF.

3. AT A LATER MEETING WITH CLAUDE-LAFONTAINE SHE EXPRESSED THE SAME CONCERN OVER POSSIBLE DELAY AND WE GAVE HER THE SAME ANSWER THAT HAD EARLIER BEEN GIVEN TO FROMENT-MEURICE. SHE INDICATED SHE WAS AWARE OF THE EARLIER CONVERSATION. CLAUDE-LAFONTAINE SAID THAT THE GOF WAS EDGY OVER THE POSSIBILITY OF FURTHER PROTRACTED DELAY IN BEGINNING SERVICE TO NEW YORK BECAUSE OF EXPIRATION IN SEPTEMBER OF THE SIXTEEN-MONTH TRIAL PERIOD AT DULLES, WHEN THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT WOULD HAVE TO TAKE THE DECISION ON WHETHER TO GIVE CONCORDE DEFINITIVE AUTHORIZATION TO SERVE WASHINGTON DC. (COMMENT: NEITHER FROMENT-MEURICE NOR CLAUDE-LAFONTAINE MENTIONED ANYTHING ABOUT A FRENCH DEMARCH BEING CARRIED OUT IN WASHINGTON ON CONCORDE ON THAT SAME DAY, NOR DID THEY RAISE WITH US ANY OF THE POINTS THAT WERE SUBJECT OF THE FRENCH AMBASSADOR'S NOTE VERBALE REPORTED REFTTEL.

4. FRENCH PRESS REACTION TO THE COURT OF APPEALS DECISION DID NOT MAKE MANY FRONT PAGES, AND THE GENERAL REACTION WAS THAT THIS WAS BUT ANOTHER LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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DELAY IN CONCORDE'S LONG BATTLE AT NEW YORK. THE MOST STRIDENT REACTION CAME FROM THE FINANCIAL DAILY LES ECHOS , WHICH WAS MOVED TO COMMENT IN BOLD PRINT: "TOO MUCH, THIS IS TOO MUCH." (LES ECHOS INDIGNATION WAS HEIGHTENED BY EVIDENCE IT SAW THAT US "DISCRIMINATION" AGAINST CONCORDE HAS NOW BECOME "OFFICIAL" AND EXTENDED ALSO TO AIRBUS, NAMELY, THE REPORT THAT THE INTERNATIONAL TRADE COMMISSION HAS DECIDED TO TAKE A CLOSE LOOK AT EASTERN'S CONTRACT WITH AIRBUS INDUSTRIE FOR THE LEASING OF FOUR AIRBUSES.) LE MONDE, WHICH HAD EARLIER CRITICIZED THE JUSTICE DEPT.'S SUBMISSION OF USG VIEWS TO THE COURT OF APPEALS AS LONG ON SENTIMENT BUT SHORT ON LEGAL ARGUMENTS, WRITES THAT THE COURT OF APPEALS "FOLLOWED THE LINE OF CONDUCT WHISPERED IN ITS EAR BY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT THROUGH THE

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STRATEGEM OF TESTIMONY FILLED WITH PIOUS
WISHES AND KIND WORDS" AS REGARDS CONCORDE. IN THE
OPINION OF LE FIGARO, THE COURT OF APPEALS
ENDED UP BY DECIDING THAT EVERYBODY WAS A LITTLE
BIT RIGHT INSTEAD OF HANDING DOWN A CLEAR JUDGMENT.

5. CONCORDE OBVIOUSLY CAME IN FOR MENTION BY
PRIME MINISTER BARRE IN HIS SPEECH AT THE OFFICIAL
LUNCHEON AT THE PARIS AIR SHOW ON JUNE 11.
WHILE THIS WAS BEFORE THE COURT OF APPEALS DECISION
WAS KNOWN , BARRE'S VIEWS CERTAINLY
STAND UNCHANGED TODAY AS A STATEMENT OF GOF
POLICY ON CONCORDE. AFTER TAKING A FEW SNIDE
DIGS AT THE DOMINANT POSITION OF US AIRCRAFT
CONSTRUCTORS "ON A LARGE AND PROTECTED DOMESTIC
MARKET," AT THE NEED FOR "LOYAL AND BALANCED
COMPETITION ON BOTH SIDES OF THE ATLANTIC,"
AND ON THE NEED TO DO AWAY WITH "CERTAIN TARIFF AND
NON-TARIFF BARRIERS PUT IN PLACE BY OUR AMERICAN
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PARTNERS" WHICH HAMPER EUROPEAN AIRCRAFT SALES, BARRE TURNED TO CONCORDE: QUOTE CONCORDE MUST NOT BE THE VICTIM OF DIFFICULTIES THAT ONE MIGHT DESCRIBE AS STEMMING FROM A UNILATERAL CONCEPTION OF FREE COMPETITION. OVER THE PAST YEAR CONCORDE HAS FULLY CONFIRMED ITS CAPABILITY BY IMPOSING ITSELF IN COMMERCIAL SERVICE TO RIODE JANEIRO, CARACAS, BAHREIN, AND WASHINGTON, OPERATING WITH EXCEPTIONAL REGULARITY, WITHOUT PROVOKING IN ANY WAY THE INCONVENIENCE THAT ITS BIASED CRITICS HAD ALLEGED.

UNDER THESE CONDITIONS, NO ONE COULD UNDERSTAND WHY THE ROUTE TO NEW YORK SHOULD REMAIN CLOSED TO CONCORDE.

THE UNITED STATES HAS ON COUNTLESS OCCASIONS DEMONSTRATED TO THE WORLD ITS OWN TECHNOLOGICAL AUDACITY AND ITS ATTACHMENT TO THE VIRTUES OF FREE AND LOYAL COMPETITION. THE UNITED STATES TODAY CANNOT BE INSPIRED BY A DIFFERENT SPIRIT IN RESOLVING THIS GRAVE AFFAIR.

WE THEREFORE WAIT FOR JUSTICE TO BE DONE. UNQUOTE

6. THE ABOVE PASSAGE ON CONCORDE IN BARRE'S SPEECH, AND PASSING REFERENCE TO CONCORDE ("DELAYING TACTICS") IN THE INTRODUCTORY SPEECH MADE BY JACQUES MAILLET, HEAD OF THE FRENCH AEROSPACE INDUSTRIES GROUP, BROUGHT FORTH THE ONLY SPONTANEOUS (?) SHOWS OF APPLAUSE FROM THE LARGELY FRENCH AUDIENCE DURING THE TWO SPEECHES.

7. CLAUDE-LAFONTAINE HAS CLAIMED THE DUBIOUS HONOR OF BEING THE AUTHOR OF THE CONCORDE PASSAGE IN BARRE'S SPEECH. SHE TELLS US THAT THE INITIAL DRAFT CONTAINED THE WORDS "WITH CONFIDENCE" IN THE FINAL SENTENCE QUOTED ABOVE ("WE THEREFORE WAIT WITH CONFIDENCE FOR JUSTICE TO BE DONE"), BUT THEY WERE STRICKEN FROM THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TEXT BY THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE.
GAMMON

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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TAGS: EAIR, FR, UK, US
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